A Collection of Sundry PETITIONS

PRESENTED to the

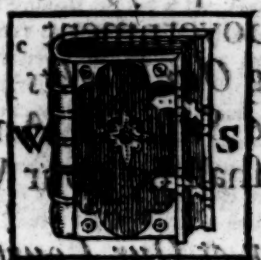
KINGS

Most Excellent Majesty. ch. 1:

Also, to the two most Honourable Houses, now assembled in PARLIAMENT.

And others already signed, by most of the *Gentry*, *Ministers* and *Freeholders* of several Counties, in behalf of *Episcopacy*, *Liturgy*, and supportation of *Church Revenues*, and suppression of *Schismatics*.

Collected by a faithfull Lover of the *Church*, for the comfort of the *Distressed Clergy*, and all moderately affected *Protestants*.



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Charls R.

OVr Will and Command is, and We doe hereby authoriſe you forthwith to Print, Publiſh, and diſperſe, a Certain Book, Entituled, *A Collection of the Petitions of divers Counties of this Our Kingdome, Subſcribed by the* Gentry, Miniſters, *and* Freeholders *of thoſe Counties, in behalf of* Epiſcopacy, *the* Lyturgie, *and* Church Government, *and for the eſtabliſhing Our Rights, and the Liberty of the Subject.* And for ſo doing, This ſhall be your Warrant.

Given at Our Court at York the 20th. of May, 1642.

The Collector to Reader.

READER,

LET me put thee in minde (as these times do me) of a speciall Law in (that singular patterne of a well composed State) Sparta. So sensible were they of the ill effects of Innovations in Government, that who ever proposed a new Law, presented himself with a Halter about his neck, his Head paid the Trespasse of a new invented Prejudice. But oh; Quantum mutantur Tempora, quantum nos, So rare a gift have the illuminated fancies of this all-knowing age, That old women without Spectacles can discover popish plots, young men and prentizes assume to regulate the Rebellion in Ireland, Sea-men and Marriners reforme the house of Peers, poore-men, porters, and labourers spye out a malignant party, and discipline them; The Country clouted shoe renew the decayed trade of the City. The cobler patch up a Religion, and all these petition for a translation, both of Church and State, with so little fear of the halter, that they would think themselves neglected, if they had not thanks for their care of the Re-publick; only he that desires the ratification of an old Law, or of a long settled Ecclesiastick Government looks as if the Halter were his share; And though there be thirty thousand hands subscribed to it, 'Tis ods, not one of all these dares preferre a Petition to that purpose: Oh! Quis pudor quod non præstet fides quod præstitit infidelitas. Oh! what a shame is it, that an ignorant Separatist shall covertly draw Subscribers out of blind zeal to loose papers, and those to be annext to some Embryon yet unhatcht, and delivered in the name of a County, with confidence, when a Knight of a shire shall perhaps smother the true child and dares not own it. That a few innovations shall be able to summon to Black-heath, South-warke, and Saint-George his fields, thousands of credulous people, with implicite faiths, to go along with Petitions, shall be shewed them when they come there, for the alteration of laws and Government: and the resolutions of an assizes or Sessions of Justices, published in all Parishes, signed by all the free-holders of a County,

for the supportation of Laws and Government, shall not produce one Patriot to present the unanimous desires of a County: yet it falls out often so when single hearted men are encountered by a faction, each man thinks he stands alone unassured of a second, when ten of the other confederated make more noyse then 10000. silent men. Episcopacy and Lyturgie are both legally planted, at this time both violently assaulted: The question is, whether the battery, or the defence be the stronger: the one side charges furiously, the other suffers silently, patiently, and a reserved strength oft masters a violent: But each Orthodox son of the Church thinks himself in Eliahs case, that he alone is left of all the Prophets, and alas, what can he do? And perhaps thou my Reader art one of those, Courage man, the same God that taught him to know, he had reserved seven thousand, that had never bowed their knees to Baal, when he opens thy eyes, can shew thee not seven, but seventy times seven thousand true Protestants, that will lend their hands and hearts to uphold that apostolick order, this blessed forme of Divine Service The busines is, 'tis a hard time, every man's afraid to break his skins by being foremost: But the Ice is broke already, This Collection of these many sleeping Petitions will shew every County that the way is open: And since noise and number are taken into consideration, the forwardnesse of the Assaylants will, I beleeve, put shame upon the Defendants to be so far behind. The Judges being honourable, and impartially receiving the arguments on both sides, I presume none will discover a distrust of a faire acceptance, or betray a Trust (out of a personall respect) by detayning such petitions, as the Counties have committed into their hands. If all such as are already signed see the light, I am sure this volume will be a large one, and the number, and quality of the defendants, as much over-sway the opponents; as their arguments drawn from the Laws of God and man, will out weigh the Motives of those, who only will, because they will. As if it were causenough to overthrow established Laws, that they have desired it, though they shew no reason for it: But if all other Counties, all true Protestants with like liberty expresse their affections, the distractions of the Church will be quickly setled; To that good work I have lent my hand, by lending thee and the world this light.

Farewell.

A PETITION DELIVERED In to the Lords SPICITVALL and TEMPORALL.

By Sir THOMAS ASTON *Baronet*, from the County *Palatine of Chester* concerning EPISCOPACY.

To the High and Honourable Court of PARLIAMENT.

The Nobility, Knights, Gentry, Ministers, Freeholders, and Inhabitants of the County Palatine *of* Chester, *whose names are subscribed in the severall Schedules hereunto annexed.*

Humbly shew;

THat whereas divers Petitions have lately been carried about this County, against the present forme of Church-government (and the hands of many persons of ordinary quality solicited to the same, with pretence to be presented to this Honourable Assembly) which we conceiving not so much to aime at Reformation, as absolute Innovation of Government, and such as must give a great advantage to the Adversaries of our Religion, we held it our duty to disavow them all.

And humbly pray, that we incurre no miscensure, if any such clamours have (without our privity) assum'd the name of the County.

We, as others, are sensible of the common grievances of the Kingdome, & have just cause to rejoyce at, & acknowledge with

thankefulneſſe, the pious care which is already taken for the ſuppreſſing of the growth of Popery, the better ſupply of able miniſters, and the removing of all Innovation; and we doubt not, but in your great wiſdomes you will regulate the rigour of Eccleſiaſticall Courts, to ſuit with the temper of our Laws, and the nature of Free-men.

Yet when we conſider, that Biſhops were inſtituted in the time of the Apoſtles; That they were the great lights of the Church in all the firſt general Counſels; That ſo many of them ſowd the ſeeds of religion in their bloods, and reſcured Chriſtianity from utter extirpation in the Primitive Heathen perſecutions; That to them we ow the redemption of the purity of the Goſpel, we now profeſſe from *Romiſh* corruption; That many of them for the propagation of the truth, became ſuch glorious Martyrs; That divers of them (lately &) yet living with us, have been ſo great aſſertours of our religion againſt its common enemy of *Rome*; & that their Government hath been ſo long approved, ſo oft eſtabliſhed by the Common & Statute-laws of this Kingdom; and as yet nothing in their Doctrine (generally taught) diſſonat from the word of God, or the Articles ratified by Law. In this caſe to call their Government, a perpetuall Vaſſalage, an intollerable Bondage; And (*prima facie & inaudita altera parte*) to pray the preſent removall of them, or (as in ſome of their Petitions) to ſeek the utter diſſolution & ruine of their offices (as Antichriſtian) we cannot conceive to reliſh of juſtice or charity, nor can we joyn with them.

But on the contrary, when we conſider the tenour of ſuch writings, as in the name of Petitions, are ſpread amongſt the common people; the tenents preached publickly in Pulpits, & the contents of many printed Pamphlets, ſwarming amongſt us; all of them dangerouſly exciting a diſobedience to the eſtabliſhed form of Government, and their ſeverall intimations of the deſire of the power of the keys, & that their congregations may execute Eccleſiaſtical cenſures within themſelves, we cannot but expresour juſt fears, that their deſire is to introduce an abſolute innovation of Presbyteral Government, whereby we who are now governed by the Canon & Civill Laws, diſpenſed by twenty-ſix ordinaries (eaſily reſponſal to Parliaments for any deviation from the rule of law) conceive we ſhould become expoſed to the meer arbitrary government of a numerous Presbytery, who together with

their

their ruling Elders, will arise to neere forty thousand Church Governours, and with their adherents, must needs bear so great a sway in the Common wealth, that if future inconvenience shall be found in that Government, wee humbli offer to consideration, how these shall be reducibly by Parliaments, how consistent with a Monarchy, and how dangerously conducible to an Anarchy, which wee have just cause to pray against, as fearing the consequences would prove the utter losse of Learning and Lawes, which must necessarily produce an extermination of Nobility, Gentry, and Order, if not of Religon.

With what vehemency of Spirit, these things are prosecuted, & how plausibly such popular infusions spread as incline to a parity wee held it our duty to represent to this Honourable assembly; And humbly pray, That some such present course be taken, as in your Wisdome shall be thought fit to suppresse the future dispersing of such dangerous discontents amongst the Common-people. Wee having great cause to feare, that of all the distempers that at present threaten the well-fare of the State, there is none worthy the mature & grave consideration of this Honourable assembly, then to stop the Torrent of such spirits before they swell beyond the bounds of Government. Then wee doubt not but his Majesty Persevering in his gracious inclination to hear the complaints & relieve the grievances of the Subjects in frequent Parliaments, it will so unite the Head and the body, so indissolubly cement the affections of his people to our Royall Soveragine, that without any other change of Government. Hee can never want revenue, nor wee justice,

Wee have presumed to annex a Coppy of a Petition (or Libell) dispersed, and certaine positions preacht in this County, which wee conceive imply matter of dangerous consequence to the peace of the Church and State. All which wee humbly submit to your great Judgements, praying they may bee read. And shall ever pray.

Subscribed to this Petition.

Foure Noblemen.
Knight Baronets, Knights and Esquires, fourscore and odde.
Divines three score and tenne.
Gentlemen three hundred and odde.
Freeholders, and other Inhabitants, above six thousand.
All of the same County.

To the High and Honourable Court of PARLIAMENT:

The humble Petition of the Vniversity of OXFORD.

Sheweth,

THat whereas the Vniversity hath been informed of severall Petitions concerning the present Government of this Church and maintenance of the Clergy, which have of late been exhibited to this Honourable Assembly; Wee could not but thinke our selves bound in duty to God, and this whole Nation charity to our selves & Successours, who have, & are like to have more then ordinary interest in any resolution that shall be taken concerning Church affairs, in all humility, to desire the continuance of that form of Government, which is now established here, and hath beene preserved in some of the Eastern and Western Churches, in a continued Succession of *Bishops*, downe from the very Apostles to this present time; the like whereof cannot be affirmed of any other forme of Governement in any Church. Vpon which consideration, and such other motives as have beene already represented to this Honourable Parliament from other Persons and places (with whom we concure) in behalfe of *Episcopacy*. Wee earnestly desire, that you would protect that ancient and *Apostolicall Order* from ruine or diminution.

And become further Suiters for the continuance of those pious Foundations of *Cathedrall Churches*, with their Lands and Revenues.

As Didicate to the Service and Honour of God, soone after the Plantation of Christianity in the *English Nation*.

As thought fit and usefull to bee preserved for that end, when the Nurseries of *Superstition* were demolished, and so continued in the last & best times, since the blessed Reformation under King *Edward* 6 Queen *Elizabeth*, and King *James*, Princes renowned through the World for their piety and wisdom:

As approved and confirmed by the Lawes of this Land, ancient and moderne:

As the principall outward motive and encouragement of all Students, especially in Divinity and the fittest reward of some deepe and eminent Scholars:

As

As producing or nourishing in all ages, many godly and learned Men, who have most strongely asserted the truth of that Religion we professe, against the many fierce oppositions of our adversaries of *Rome*.

As affording a competent portion in an ingenuous way to many younger Brothers of good Parentage, who devote themselves to the Ministery of the Gospell.

As the onely means of subsistence to a multitude of Officers and other Ministers, who with their Families depend upon them, and are wholly maintained by them.

As the maine authours or upholders of diverse Schooles, Hospitals, High-wayes, Bridges, and other publique and pious Workes:

As speciall causes of much profit and advantage to those Cities where they are scituate, not onely by relieving their poor and keeping convenient Hospitality, but by occasioning a frequent resort of Strangers from other parts, to the great benefit of all Tradesmen, and Inhabitants in those places.

As the goodly Monuments of our Predecessours Piety, and present Honour of this *Kingdome* in the eye of Forraigne Nations.

As the chiefe support of many thousand Familes of the Laity, who injoy faire estates from them in a free way.

As yeelding a constant and ample revenue to the Crowne:

And, as by which many of the learned *Professors* in our *University* are maintained.

The subversion or alination whereof must (as wee conceive) not onely be attended with such consequences, as will redound to the scandall of many well affected to our Religion, but open the mouthes of our adversaries, and of Posterity against us, and is likely in time to draw after it harder conditions upon a considerable part of the Laity, an universall cheapnesse and contempt upon the Clergy, a lamentable drooping and defection of industry and knowledge in the *Universities*; which is easie to foresee, but will be hard to remedy.

May it therefore please this Honourably Assemble, *upon these and such other Considerations as your great Wisdomes shall suggest, to take such pious care for the continuance of these* Religious Houses, *and their Revenues, according to the best intentions of their* Founders, *as may be to the most furthenance of Gods glory and*

service the Honour of this Church and Nation, the advancement of Religion *and* Learning, *the encouragement of the modest hopes & honest endeavours of many hundred* Students *in the* Universities.
Who do and shall ever pray, &c.

Dat: Anno Dom. *Millesimo sexcent. quad. primo è Domo Convocationis, in celebri Conventu Doctorum ac Magistrorum, omnibus & singulis assentientibus.*

Honoratissimis viris Equitibus, Civibus Burgensibus Supremæ Curiæ Parliamentiæ SENATORIBUS Consultissimis.

Summum demissione.

Senatores Honoratissimi,

NOn veremur ne voluentibus tanta negotia molesti simus Accademia Cantabrigiensis, *cum nihil sit aut ad* Religionem *certius, aut ad splendorem nominis excelsius, quam suscipere* Litterarum *clientelam. In quo studio, cum singularis animi vestri propensio semper elaxerit, tum nulla in re magis possit eminere, quam si* Ecclesiæ *honestamenta ea quæ sub* optimis Regibus *tam diu optinuerunt, indelibata tueamini.*

Non enim agitur unius Accademiæ, *non minus etetis causa, nam nec industria poterit non relanguescere, nec bona indoles ali, atque augeri, nec vota parentum non in irritum cadere, nisi spe non vana suffulciantur. Quam præmaturum putemus bonis artibus occasum imminere si stipendium idem* Militi *sit quod* Imperatori? *Sunt qui expediendis* Scholasticorum *ambagibus, evolvendis antiquorum* Patrum *monumentis, expurgandæ feci* Romanæ, *velut* Augiæ *stabulo, se totos impenderunt, nec aliâ mercedem prensant, quam in* Ecclesia Cathedrali *tandem aliquando quasi in portu conquiescere. Et a fit, ut quod ignavis* Asylum *incitiæ est, id candidioribus ingeniis* pro stimulo *sit ad optima persequenda, nec æquitas judiciorum vestrorum ferret, improbitatem nonnullorum in publicam calamitatem redundare.* Impetigo Romana *quam amplam sum sibi nacta videbitur se diffundendi materiam, cum non sit nisi imbelles adversarios habitura? neque enim certamini vacare possunt, qui id unice agunt,*

tu

ut in rostris Concionibus *sudent; etiam nunc percentiscere nobis videmur undam atque inanem* Accademiam, *& antiquam paupertatem quasi præludio perhorrescimus: nec vestra progenies non aliquando ventura est in tantarum miseriarum partes.* Qum itaque enatores Amplissimi per spes Parentum, per illecebras industriæ, per subsidia simul & ornamenta dietatis, per vincula, nervos, & firmamenta Literarum, velitis splendorem Ecclesiæ, qui longissimis ab usque temporibus, ad nostra tempora deductus est, authoritate vestra communire. *Sed quia Lingua nativa dolores & desideria sua fælicius exprimit, annexam* Literis Petitionem *benevolis auribus excipitis.*

Honori vestro Deditissimi

Procancellarius, reliquusque cætus
Accademiæ CANTABRIGIENSIS

Datæ è frequenti Conventu nostro *Cantabr. tertio Idus Aprilis* 1641.

Lecta 12. *Maii* 1641.

To the Honourable the Knights Citizens, and Burgesses of the House of *Commons* assembled in *Parliament*.

The humble Petition of the University *of* CAMBRIDGE

Sheweth,

THat your *Petitioners* have heard of divers suggestions offered to this *Honourable Court* by way of Remonstrance, tending to the subversion of *Cathedriall Churches*, & alienation of those *Lands* by which they are supported, being the ancient Inheritance of the *Church*, Founded and bestowed by the Religious bounty of many *Famous & renowned Kings & Princes of the Land*, & other *Benefactours*, both of the *Clergy and Laity*, and established and confirmed unto them by the *Laws* of this *Kingdome*, & so accordingly have been employed to the advancement of *Learning*, the encouragement

ragement of *Students*, and perferment of *Learned men*, besides many other pious and charitable *Vses*.

May it please this *Honourable Court*, out of their great wisdome and tender care for the cheerishing of *Learning*, & furtherance of the *Studies*, and paines of those who have, and do devote themselves to the service of the Church, gratiously to Protect, and secure those *Religious Foundations* from ruine, and Alienation; and withall to take order that they may be reduc'd to the due observations of their *Statutes*, and that all *Innovations* and *Abuses*, which have by some mens miscarriages crept in, may be reformed, that so the *Students* of our *University*, which by the present fears, both are, and will be much sadded and dejected, may be the better invited to pursue their *Studies* with alacrity, and the places themselves disposed to the most serviceable and deserving men; according to their first Institution.

And your Petitioners as in duty bound shall ever pray, &c.

To the Honourable House of *Commons* now Assembled in the high Court of *Parliament*.

The most humble Petition of the Nobility, Gentry, Clergy, and Commons within the County of Nottingham.

Humbly shewing,

THat whereas we are informed, that a Petition, together with a Remonstrance, hath in the name of this County, been heretofore presented to this Honourable House, for the alterations in Church-Government.

We do humbly crave leave to certifie your Honours, that the same was done without our knowledge, or consent, & that we do hereby dis-avow the same. And with the like humility, do desire, That the long established Government of the Church may still continue, & that the abuses & errours of some particular persons may

may not cause the alteration of the ancient Government, but rather that, such persons should suffer according to their Demerits. And we likewise humbly crave, the *Book of Common Prayer*, by Law established, may continue in force, with such alteration (if there be cause) as to your Honours Wisdomes shall seem meet.

And as in duty bound, We shall duly pray, &c.

Subscribed by the Viscount, five Knights, above a hundred Gentlemen of quality, all the Clergy of the County, and above five thousand Communers, being all of them Communicants.

The Remonstrance and Petition of the County of *Huntington*, the Knights, Gentlemen, Clergy, Free-holders, and Inhabitants.

To the Right Honourable the Lords, and Commons assembled in parliament for the continuance of the *Church-Government* and *Divine Service*, or book of *Common-Prayer*.

Presented to the house of Peers by the Lord Privy Seal the 8. of December, 1641.

We humbly shew,

THat whereas many attempts have been practised and Divers Petitions from severall Counties, and other places within this Kingdome framed and penned in a close and subtile manner, to import more then is at first discernable by any ordinary eye, or that was imparted to those who signed the same, have been carried about to most places against the present forme and frame of Church-Government, and Divine-service, or Common Prayers, and the hands of many persons of ordinary quality solicited to the same, with pretence to be presented to this honourable assembly in Parliament, and under colour of removing some Innovations lately crept into the Church, and Worship of God, and reforming some errors in the Ecclesiastical Courts, which we conceiving and fearing not so much to aime at the taking away of the said innovations, and reformation

formation of abuses, as tending to an absolute Innovation of Church Government, and subversion of that Order and forme of Divine Service, which hath happily continued amongst us ever since the Reformation of Religion: Out of a tender and zealous regard hereunto, we have thought it our duty, not onely to disavow all such Petitions, but also to manifest our publick affections, and desires to continue the Forme of Divine Service, and Common Prayers, and the present Government of the Church, as the same hath been continued since the first Reformation, and stand so established by the Lawes and Statutes of this Kingdome.

For when we consider that the forme of Divine Service expressed and contained in the book of Common-Prayer, was with great care, piety and sincerity, revised and reduced from all former corruptions and Romish Superstitions, by those holy and selected Instruments of the reformation of Religion within this Church, and was by them restored to its first purity, according as it was instituted and practised in the primitive times, and ever since confirmed, established, and enjoyned by Act of Parliament and Royall Injunctions, and hath ever since had the generall approbation of the godly, and a publick use and continuance within this Church. And that Bishops were instituted, and have had their being and continuance ever since the first planting of Christian Religion amongst us, and the rest of the Christian World, that they were the lights and Glorious Lamps of Gods Church, that so many of them sowed the seeds of Christian Religion in their bloods, which they willingly poured out therefore, that by them Christianity was rescewed and preserved from utter extirpation in the fierce and most cruell Persecutions of Pagan Emperours, that to them we owe the redemption of the purity of the Gospell, and the Reformation of the Religion we now professe, from Romish corruption, that many of them for the propagation of that Truth became glorious Martyrs, leaving unto us an holy example, and an honourable remembrance of their faith and Christian fortitude, that divers of them lately, and yet living with us, have been so great assertours and Champions of our Religion against the Common enemy of Rome, and that their Government hath been so antient, so long approved, and so often established by the lawes and Statutes of this Kingdome, and as yet nothing in their Doctrine (generally taught) dissonant from the Word of God, or the Articles established by Law, and that most of them are of singular learning and piety. In this case to call the forme of Divine Service and Common Prayer Erronious, Popish, Superstitious, Idolatrous, and Blasphemous, and to call the Government by Bishops, a perpetuall vassallage, and intollerable bondage, and at the first step, and before the parties concerned be heard

to

to pray the present removall of them, or the utter dissolution and extirpation of them, their Courts and their Officers, as Antichristian and Diabolicall, we cannot conceive to favour or relish of piety, justice or charity, nor can we joyn with them herein, but rather humbly pray a reformation of the abuses, and punishment of the Offenders, but not the ruine or abolition of the Innocent.

Now on the contrary, when we consider the tenour of such writings, as in the name of Petitions are spread amongst the Common people, the contents of many printed Pamplets swarming at London, and over all the Counties, the Sermons preached publickly in Pulpits, and other private places, and the bitter invectives divulded, and commonly spoken by many disaffected persons, all of them shewing an extreme averseneſse and dislike of the present Government of the Church, and Divine Service, or Common Prayers; dangerously exciting a disobedience to the established forme of Government and Church Service, their severall intimations of the desire of the power of the keyes, and that their congregations may be independent, and may execute Ecclesiasticall censures within themselves whereby many sects, and severall and contrary opinions will soon grow and arise, whereby great divisions and horrible factions will soone ensue thereupon, to the breach of that union, which is the sacred band and preservation of the Common peace of Church and State: their peremptory desires and bold assuming to themselves the liberty of conscience to introduce into the Church whatsoever they affect, and to refuse and oppose all things which themselves shall dislike, & what they dislike must not only to themselves, but also to all others be scandalous & burdensome, & must be carried out upon, as great and unsupportable grievances, yea though the things in themselves, be never so indifferent of never so long continuance in use and practise, and never so much desired and affected of others, so that where three or foure of them be in a parish, though five hundred others desire the use and continuance of things long used, all must be altered or taken away as scandals & grievances for these three or foure, though to the offence of many others, and whatsoever they will have introduced, must be imposed upon all others, and must by all be admitted without scandall or offence, whereby multitudes of godly and wel-affected people are in some things deprived or abridged of what they desire and take comfort in, and have had a long and lawfull use and practise of, and other things imposed upon them against their wills and liking, as if no accompt were to be made of them, or no liberty of conscience were left unto them: which bold attempts of some few to arrogate to themselves, and to exercise over all others, what high presumption is it? and how great a tyranny may it

prove over the minds and consciences of men? The great increase of late of Schismaticks and Sectaries, and of persons not onely separating and sequestering themselves from the publike Assembly at Common Prayers *and* Divine Service, *but also opposing, and tumultuously interrupting others in the performance thereof in the publike Congregation, the frequent and many Conventicles held amongst them, and their often meetings at all publicke conventions of Assizes, Sessions, Faires, markets, and other publike Assemblies, their earnest labour to solicit and draw the people to them, and the generall correspondence held amongst them to advance their ends herein. Of these things wee cannot but take notice, and must needs expresse our just feares, that their desires and indeavours are to worke some great change and mutation in the present state of the Church Government, and in the forme and publick worship of God, and Divine Service, and Common Prayers.*

Of the Common grievances of the Kingdome, wee as others, have beene and are sensible, and doe professe that wee have just cause with joy and comfort to remember; and with thankefulnesse to acknowledge the pious care which is already taken for the suppressing of the growth of Popery, the better supply of able and painfull Ministers, and the removing of all Innovation, and wee doubt not, but in your great wisdomes you will regulate the rigour and exorbitancy of the Ecclesiasticall Courts, to suit with the temper of our Common Lawes, and the nature and condition of Freemen. And wee hope and humbly pray, that the present forme of Church Government, and of Church Service, and Common Prayers, now established by the Statutes of this Kingdome shall bee setled, and that all such as shall oppose themselves against the same, or shall doe, or speake any thing in derogation or depraving of the said Divine Service, or Book of Common Prayer, may without any further tolleration or continuance under goe the paine, punishment and forfeitures due therefore; and that such care shall bee taken for placing of Orthodox and peaceable men, Lecturers in all places, whose Doctrine may tend rather to sound instruction and edification, then lead to Schisme and Faction; all which wee humbly submit to your great judgements, and shall pray to God to assist and direct you from above with his heavenly wisdome, to guide and bring all your consultations to happy conclusions.

To the High and Honourable Court of *Parliament* now sitting.

The humble petition and Remonstrance of the Knights, Gentry, Clergy, Freeholders, and Inhabitants of the County of Somerset.

Delivered to the *House of Peers* by the Lord Marquesse *Hartford* the 10. of *December*, 1641.

Wee humbly shew;

THat having with grief of mind heard of sundry Petitions, which have been exhibited to this Right Honourable Assembly, by some of the Clergy and Laity about *London*, and some Counties tending to the subversion of the Church government established in this Kingdome; Wee therefore tendring the Peace and welfare of Both, Doe in all humblenesse presume to make known our Opinions and desires concerning the same: Nothing doubting, of the like good acceptance of our humble *Petition* and *Remonstrance* in this behalf, being tendered with no lesse good Affection to the Peace and Happinesse of the Church, the prosperity of His Sacred Majesty, and this whole Kingdome.

For the present government of the Church, we are most thankefull to God, believing it in our hearts, to be the most pious and the wisest, that any people or Kingdome upon earth hath been blest withall since the Apostles dayes: though wee may not deny, but through the frailty of Men, and corruption of Times, some things of ill consequence, and other needlesse, are stollen, or thrust into it; which wee heartily wish may be reformed, and the Church restored to its former Purity. And to the end, it may be the better preserved from present and future Innovation; We wish, the wittingly and maliciously guilty, of what condition soever they be (whether Bishops or inferour Clergy) may receive condigne punishment. But, for the miscarriage of Government to destroy

the Governement; we truſt it ſhall never enter into the hearts of this wiſe, and Honourable aſſembly.

Wee will not preſume to diſpute the Right of *Epiſcopacy*, whether it be *Divine* or not; It ſufficeth us to know, that the *Church-government* by Biſhops is ancient, even neere to the Apoſtles dayes: and that it hath pleaſed God from time to time, to make them moſt glorious inſtruments for the propagation, and and preſervation of Chriſtian Religion: which with their blood, they have frequently ſealed to Poſterity. And how much this Kingdom in particular is indebted to them, for their Piety their Wiſdomes, and Sufferings; wee truſt ſhall never be forgotten. Our hearts deſire therefore is; That the *Precious* may be ſeparated from the *Vile*; that the bad may be rejected, and the good retained. Furthermore, having credibly heard, that our *Common Prayer* hath been interrupted and diſpiſed of ſome miſunderſtanding or miſled people to the great ſcandall of the Religion profeſſed in our Church; Wee humbly beſeech you to take into your care the Redreſſe therof, as of an Impiety not to be endured: as alſo to take order for the ſevere puniſhment of thoſe men (if they may be diſcovered) who frequently publiſh Pamphlets, under a veile of Religon, yet conducing to confuſion and Rebelion.

All which wee humbly offer to your Wiſdomes, as the thoughts and deſires of this *County*. And as wee are perſwaded of multitudes of the ſound Members of the *Church of England*, and his *Sacred Majeſties* moſt loyall Subjects.

Beſeeching God to direct and proſper your Councels, and yee to pardon our Errours, wee reſt

At your commands

Knights Eſquires, Divines, Gentlemen, Freeholders; Inhabitants of the County of Somerſet, (*none of them Papiſt, but all* Proteſtants *of the* Church *of* England) *and his Majeſties loyall Subjects.* } 14350

Whereof, Knights, Eſquires, and Gentlemen——200

Divines——221.

John Brown Cler. Parliament.

To

To the high and honourable Court of PARLIAMENT.

The humble petition of the Knights, Esquires, Gentlemen and Housholders in the County of Rutland, *in behalf of our selves, and our families.*

And of the Parsons, Vicars and Curates for the Clergy, in behalf of themselves and their Families.

Humbly shewing,

THat whereas there has been divers petitions exhibited to this honourable Court, by persons disaffected to the present Government, for the utter extirpation of the Apostolicall Government of the Church by Bishops; They by sedulity, and zeale supplying the want of faire pretences for the abolition of that, which we hope no just reason can condemne: and on the other side, many pious persons, true sonnes of the Church of England, have represented their just desires of the continuance of it, upon great and weighty causes, both in Divinity and true Policy; we also, lest we might seem unconcerned, and for fear least our silence should be exalted as a crime at our hands if we be deficient, to what we are perswaded is the cause of God; In pursuance of their pious intendments, and in allowance of their reasons, do also presse to your great Tribunal, and begg of you that which is the honour of Kings, to be Nutricii *of the Church, and her most ancient and successive Government.*

We therefore humbly beg of you, to leave us in that state the Apostles left the Church in; That the three ages of Martyrs were governed by; That the thirteen Ages since them have always gloried in, (by their Succession of Bishops from the Apostles, proving themselves members of the Catholick and Apostolick Church) that our Laws have established, so many Kings and Parliaments have protected, into which we were Baptized; as certainly Apostolicall, as the observation of the Lords

Lords Day, as the distinction of Books Apocryphall from Canonicall; as that such Books were written by such Evangelists and Apostles; as the consecration of the Eucharist by Presbyters; as any thing which you will do by upholding the Government of the Church by Bishops, which we again and again, begg of you to do, having pitty on our Consciences, and not forcing of us to seek Communion, as yet we know not where. So shall we be bound to pray with a multiplied devotion, for the increase of publick, and personall blessings to your honourably assembly, to your noble Persons.

We also do with all Humility begge leave to represent these our Considerations, subjoyned, which we hope you will favourably expound to be a well-meant zeal, and at least, a conscience of duty, and charity to those our fathers, from whom we have received, and daily hope to receive many Acts of Spirituall Remission.

WE consider that Christ, either left his Church without a lasting Government, or else Bishops and Presbyters under them are that Government the former we fear to say, lest we might seem to accuse the wisdome of the Father, of improvidence, in the not providing for his Family, the Feeder and the Ruler in Scripture being all one in Office, in expression, in person: So that, if he left no Rulers, he left no Feeders. The latter we are more confident of, for that Christ did clearly institute a disparity in the *Clergy*, which is the maine stone of offence, appeares in the Apostles, and seventy two Disciples, to whom according to the voice of Christendome, and traditive interpretation of the Church. Bishops and Presbyters respectively do succeed: & also many actually did succeed the Apostles in their *Chaires*, being ordained Bishops by the Apostles themselves that did survive, and also beyond all exception that Christ did institute a Government, appeares in those evangelicall words, whether then is that *Faithfull and wise Steward, whom his Lord shall make ruler over his houshold*, &c. which rulers are Bishops, and priests under them, or else the Church hath been Apostate from her

her Lord, she having clearly for fifteen hundred years had no other Rulers then such.

2. We consider that, whether it can be a Church or no with out Bishops, is at least a question of great consideration, and the Negative is maintained by Apostolicall, and primitive men and Martyrs, and by the greatest part of Christendome; and those few (in respect of the whole, that dissent being most certainly, not infallible, to be sure with Episcopacy, it may be a Church *eatenus*, therefore it is the surest course to retaine it, for fear we separate from the Church, the pillar and ground of Truth.

3 No Ordination never was without a Bishop, and if any presbyter did ever impose hands, unlesse in conjunction with a Bishop, he was accounted an Usurper, and anathematized by publike and unquestioned authority; and so without Bishops, no presbyter, then no absolution, no consecration of the Sacraments of the Lords supper, and for these wants, no man can make a recompence or satisfaction.

4. No presbyter did ever impose hands on a Bishop, which if so famous a Resolve, or publick voice of Christendome may have an estimate, shews their disparity, and that a Bishop hath a character, which cannot be imprinted without at least, an equall hand.

Viz. *De jure, non ex dem de facto*, till 55 years after Christ and then but once in the case of Pope *Pelagius*, and that it regularly never since unlesse by Papall usurpation.

5 Without Bishops no Confirmation of Children, and yet confirmation (called in Scripture Imposition of hands) S. *Paul* in his famous Catechism accounts a fundamental point, & the Church hath always used it, and it was appropriate to bishops, by the laudable custome of Christendome, and by the example of the Apostles, in the case of the *Samaritane* Christians, whom *Philip* the Evangelist had converted, and is charged upon the parents of Children, that they bring their Children to Bishops to be Confirmed, and it was never otherwise, but just as in the Case of Ordination, (*vide'icet*,) by singularity and usurpation, till of late, that the Jesuites to enlarge their *Phylacteries*, have striven to make Bishops not necessary, by communicating Confirmation to the Priests of their Order.

6. To take away Bishops, is against the Wisdome of the State of *England*, ever since the Reformation, and having been attempted by clancular practises, was checked by the Princes respectively, and their Councell, and confidently, by the wisdome

of preceding Parliaments, and this althongh the Bishops then were lesse learned, and as much infamed.

7. We are sure that Episcopall Government hath consisted with Monarchy, ever since the *English* Monarchy was Christian, and we are to try whether any innovated Government can or will.

8. We consider, that if it could consist with monarchy, when it was byassed by the Popes prevalent incroachment, much more since the Reformation, when the King hath the raines in his own hand, and can give them Laws, and ascertaines them by their immediate dependance, both for their Baronies, & election & personall Jurisdiction on the Crown, and by the Statute of submission.

9. We consider that Saint *Hierome* (pretended as the main Authentick enemy against Episcopacy) yet sayes, That Bishops were constituted as an antidote and deletory to dis-improve the issues of Schisme, and that by the Apostles, who best knew the remedies. And now that Schismes multiplie, there is more need of Bishops, so that they cannot be taken away, upon pretence their Regiment is not neeessary, for the taking them away makes them more necessary by the multiplication of Schismes.

omcnt in piſt. ad Titum.

10. All Learning will be discountenanced, if not extinguished, upon the demolition of Episcopacy, the Bishops being parties for the advancement of Learning; and on the other side, if the Government should be in the hands of Presbytery, or lay Elders, we know no reason sufficient to stifle ous feares, lest preferment be given to people unlearned and unfit to have the maunaging of Soules, especially, since a learned Clergy will be suspected by their Lay-elders, as too knowing to be ruled by their Dictates, which will not have so much artificie and fineneſſe, as to command by strength of reason: which our fears are also increased, by considering that by the multiplication of of Lay-Elders, or other Governours, their personall interest being increased, partiality must be more frequent, and all this is besides their incompetency of judging the abilities of Schollers.

11. The removall of Bishops would be a scandall, not only to many weak Christians, who fear all innovation, as guilty of some ill intendments upon their consciences, but also to the strongest

strongest which shewes it to be the fault of the giver, not the weakneſſe of the receiver; and if we muſt not ſcandalize our weake brethren, much leſſe our ſtrong, ſince this will intrench upon us in a high meaſure, they not being apt to be ſcandalized upon umbrages, and impertinencies.

12 Where *Biſhops* are not, there is not a Honourable, but Familike Clergy, againſt the Apoſtolicall rule of double honour.

13 *By* puting down Epiſcopacy, we deprive our ſelves of thoſe ſolemne benedictions which the Faith of Chriſtendome, and the profeſſion of the *Church of England*, enjoyning the Biſhop rather to pronounce the bleſſing at the end of the Communion, appropriates to Epiſcopall preheminence above Prieſtly authority.

14 Two parts of three of the Reformed Churches are governed by Biſhops, or Superintendents (which is properly the Latine word of Biſhops) and the other part that wants them, have often wiſhed them, as their own Doctors doe profeſs.

15 It is againſt the liberties of the Clergy, indulged to them by the *Magna Charta*, granted and confirmed by ſo many Kings, and about thirty Parliaments in expreſſe act, and the violation of any part of it by intrenchment upon the right of the lay Subject, juſtly accounted a great grievance, the Charter it ſelfe being as Fundamentall a Law (as we conceive) as any other, and any of us may feare leſt his Liberties may be next in queſtion.

16 The foure great Generall *Counſels*, in eſtimation next the foure *Evangeliſts*, and by the Statutes of the Kingdom, made the rules of the judging Hereſies, were held by Biſhops, the greateſt fires and peſts of Chriſtendome, the old Hereſies, were by their Induſtry extinct; Church Diſcipline, and pious conſtitutions by them eſtabliſhed, many Nations by them converted, many Miracles done for the confirmation of *Chriſtian Faith*, one of the Goſpels written by a Biſhop (Saint *Marke* of *Alexandria*) if we believe as authentike Records, as any are extent; Three Epiſtles of Saint *Paul* written to Biſhops; Seven Epiſtles by the Holy Ghoſt himſelf recorded in the *Revelation*, and ſent to ſeven *Aſian* Biſhops, as all ancient Fathers accord: the names of twelve men, beſides Apoſtles, mentioned in Holy Scripture, which all antiquity reports to have been Biſhops; Moſt of the Fathers, whoſe works all poſterity embraces with much

Timotheus. Titus. Clements. Linus. Marcus. Dyonſius. Onemus. Caius. Epaphrodetus. Jacobus Hieroſolimit. Evodias. Simeon.

much zeale and admiration, were Bishops; these also in our apprehensions advance that Holy Function, to a high and unalterable estimate.

17 Very many of the faireſt Churches and Colledges, and places of Religion, were built by Bishops, which are faire Characters to shew their promptneſſe to doe publicke acts of Piety, and that persons so qualified as they were, that is, Governours and Clergy, and fairly endowed, is an excellent compositions to advance publicke designes for the honour of God in the Promotion of publick Piety.

18 Since it hath pleaſed this Honourable Court, of late to commend a Protestation to us, which we by solemne Vow enged our selves to attest with our lives and fortunes, the establiſhed Doctrine of the Church of *England*, we consider, that since the 36. article hath approved and establiſhed the book of *Consecration* of Bishops; the abolition of Episcopacy would nullifie that article, and should not we make humble Remonstrance to the contrary, we should sudenly recede from our great and solemne Protestation for maintenance of our *Church* Doctrine.

But may it please this Honorable Assembly we consider on the other side.

19 The introducing of Lay Elders, muſt needs bring an insupportable burthen to all Parishes, by maintaining them at the Pariſh charge (for they muſt be maintained, or else a transgreſſion is made againſt an Apoſtolicall Rule. For the principall, and indeed the onely colourable pretended place for Lay Elders, injoynes their maintenance. So that either the people muſt be oppreſſed with so great burthens, or else Saint *Pauls* Rule not obeyed, or else there is no authority for Lay Elders, as indeed there is not.

20 And also there can be no leſſe feare of Vſurpation upon the Temporall power by the Presbytery, then is pretended from Episcopacy, since that Presbytery challenges cogniſance of more causes and persons, then the Episcopacy does, (so making a dangerous entrenchment upon the Supremacy) and derives it pretence from Divine Inſtitution with more confidence and more immediate derivation then Episcopacy, though indeed moſt vainely as we conceive.

21 We crave leave also to adde this that these two (*viz.*) Episcopacy and Presbytery being the onely two in conteſtation if any new designe should juſtle Episcopacy, we are confident that

that as it hitherto wants a name, ſo it will want a face, or forme of reaſon (in caſe of Conſcience) when it ſhall appeare.

Signed by Knights, Juſtices, Gentry, and Free-holders about } 800.

By Miniſters about the number of 40.

The *Cheſhire* Petition for eſtabliſhing

of the Common-Prayer-Book, and Suppreſſion of Schiſmatiques, preſented to the Kings Majeſty, and from him recommended to the Houſe of Peeres, by the Lord KEEPER.

To the Kings moſt Excellent Majeſty, and to the Right Honourable the Lords, and the Honourable the Houſe of Commons Aſſembled in PARLIAMENT.

The humble Petition of divers of the Nobility, Juſtices, Gentry, Miniſters, Freeholders, and other Inhabitants of the County *Palatine* of *Cheſter*, whoſe Names are nominated in the Schedule annexed.

Your Petitioners with all chearfulneſſe and contentation, affying in the happy ſettlement of the diſtractions both of Church and State, by His Majeſties pious Care, and the prudent and religious endeavours of this Honourable Aſſembly, and with due humility and obedience, ſubmiting to the unanimous concluſions thereof, yet conceive themſelves bound in Duty.

HUmbly to repreſent to your mature conſiderations, that the preſent diſorders of many turbulent and ill diſpoſed Spirits, are ſuch, as give not onely occaſion of preſent diſcontent to your Petitioners, but ſeem to import ſome ill event without early prevention.

The pure ſeed of our Faith (the Doctrine of the true Reformed Proteſtant Religion) eſtabliſhed by ſo many Acts of Parliament, and ſo harmoniouſly concuring with the confeſſions of all other Reformed Churches, being tainted with the Tares of divers Sects and Schiſmes lately ſprung up amongſt us.

Our pious, laudable, and ancient form of Divine Service, com-

posed by the holy Martyrs, and worthy Instruments of Reformation established by the prudent Sages of State (your religious Predecessors) honoured by the approbation of many learned forraign Divines, subscribed by the Ministery of the whole Kingdome, and with such general content received by all the Laity, that scarse any Family or person that can read, but are furnished with the Books of Common Prayer: In he conscionable use whereof many Christian hearts have found unspeakable joy and comfort, wherein the famous Church of *Engl.* our dear Mother, hath just cause to glory; And may she long flourish in the practise of so blessed a *Liturgy*; yet it is now, not onely depraved by many of those who should teach conformity to established Laws, but in contempt thereof in many places wholly neglected. All these daily practised, with confidence, without punishment: To the great dejection of many sound Protestants, and occasioning so great insultation and rejoycing in some *Separatists*, as they not onely seem to portend, but menace some great alteration; And not containing themselves within the bounds of Civil Government, do commit many tumultuous, (if not Sacrilegious) violences both by day and night upon divers Churches.

Therefore your Petitioners being all very apprehensive of the dangerous consequences of Innovation, and much scandalized at the present disorders.

Doe all unanimously pray,

That there be admitted no Innovation of Doctrine or Liturgy, that holy publike Service being so fast rooting by a long settled continuance in this Church, that in our Opinion and Judgements, it cannot be altered (unlesse by the advice and consent of some National Synod) without an universall discontent. And that some speedy course be taken to suppresse such Schismatiques and Separatists, whose factious Spirits doe evidently endanger the peace both of Church and State.

And your Petitioners shall ever pray, &c.

The Petition signed by Lords, Knights, Justices of the Peace, and Esquires:	94.
By Gentlemen of quality,	440.
By Divines,	86.
By Freeholders and others, in all;	8936.

To

To the Kings Most Excellent Majesty, and to the High Court of PARLIAMENT.

The humble Petition of *Colledges* and *Halls*, and others, well-willers to Piety and Learning, throughout the Kingdome of *England*.

Sheweth;

THat *whereas many Persons dis-affected to the present form of Government of the Church of* England (*established not onely by the Ecclesiasticall, but also by the Common Law of this Realme, and diverse Acts of Parliament*) *have of late in great multitudes petitioned this Honourable Court against the Orders, Honour, Jurisdiction, and means of the Clergy: And have published such their desires in print, and pulpit, and daily seek to advance and propagate the same: To the great disheartning of all Learning (if such designes finde favour) the grievous scandall of the Reformed Religion as unstable, and the unspeakable advantage of our Enemies of* Rome.

WE therefore (well weighing, that the Seminaries must decay when the Garden shall be wasted) in all humility most heartily pray your Majesty, and this Honourable Court, that all the Orders of Holy Church, of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, which from the Apostles times till these, have withstood so many practices, may have yet hopes to flourish under Your gracious protection. And that by your assistance, under our most Religious Soveraign, the ancient Catholique Faith, and Discipline, as also the devout and decent service of God, in our Church Liturgy, may be defended from all Innovations, and Novelties: The means and liberties of the Churches, as well Cathedrall and Collegeat, as Parochiall, to them hitherto of right belonging, according to the pious Wills of their blessed Founders, may be continued and preserved: Many thousand Families which on them depend, secured from ruine: And that our Nation, whose Laws already favour as much as any in the world, the right of the first born, may retain Ecclesiastical promotions, as the Patrimony of younger Children, the prize of labour and study, an incitement of learning, and a reward of those that can intitle themselves thereto by honest desert.

And your Petitioners shall ever pray, &c.

This

This Petition is ſubſcribed, generally by all the Doctors, Maſters, and Batchelours of all Degrees and Faculties in the Univerſty of Oxford; *And by very many other perſons of quality: Baronets, Knights, Eſquires, Miniſters and Gentlemen, within the Counties of* Oxford, Berks, Wilts, South-hampton, Dorſet, Kent, Surrey, Weſtmerland, Cumberland, *and other Shires.*

Devonſhire Petition.

To the Right Honourable the Lords *Spirituall* and *Temporall*, now aſſembled in the Houſe of PARLIAMENT.

The humble Information and Petition, of the Knights, Eſquires, Gentlemen, and others of abilty, within the Dioceſſe of Exeter.

WE whoſe Names are underwritten, have for theſe many years, found the benefit and comfort of *Epiſcopall Government*, under which we have lived hitherto peacably, and happily, with great freedome and frequency of the *Preaching* of the Goſpel, and incouragement of the conſcionable and painfull preachers thereof. As we bleſſe God for his favour to us in the behalf, So we doe humbly and earneſtly profeſſe our deſire, that the ſame Government may be ſtill continued both to us, and our poſterity, ſubmitting all perſonall offences, and redreſſe of abuſes to your Honourable Wiſdomes.

In witneſſe whereof, we have hereunto ſubſcribed.

Signed by Knights, Eſquires, Gentlemen, and other Inhabitants, neer upon *Eight thouſand.*

The

The Staffordshire Petition.

To the Right Honourable the *Lords*, and COMMONS Assembled in the High Court of PARLIAMENT.

The humble Petition of the Knights, Gentlemen, Ministers, Freeholders, and other Inhabitants, within the County of Stafford, *hereunto subscribed.*

Who most humbly pray,

THat the present publique form of Gods Worship, and Administration of the blessed Sacrament, with other Rites agreeable to Gods holy Word, and purest antiquity, which hath been formerly, sundry times established by godly Acts of Parliament, may now again in these broken and troubled times, be to Gods glory, and the Churches Peace, re-established, and confirmed.

That Episcopacy being the ancientest, and Primitive Government of the Church, renowned for successes, victorious against Schismes and Heresies, and especially of late years, against that *Hydra* of Heresies, the *Roman* Papacy, glorious for ancient and late Martyrdomes, happy before the corruption of Popery, and since the Reformation in the Plantation, and Preservation of Truth and Peace; eminently serviceable to this Commonwealth, most compliable with the Civill Government (into the Fabrick, and body of which it is riveted and incorporate) and most apt and easie at all times by the State to be reduced into Order, may for the future, as formerly, by your great Authority be continued and maintained for the glory of God, preservation of Order, Peace, and Unity, the Reformation and suppression of wickednesse and vice, and the mature prevention of Schisms, Factions and Seditions. The which we, your humble Petitioners, the more earnestly beseech your Honours to grant, For that strong fear do possesse our hearts, that the sudden mutation of a Government so long settled, so well known, and approved, cannot recompence with any proportionable utility, the disturban-

ces, and disorders which it may work by novelty, being most confident, in your Honours, Wisdome, and Justice; That all excessive exorbitances, and incroachments, which shall be found issuing, not from any poison in the nature of the Discipline, but rather from the infirmity, or corruption of the person (unto which the very best Government is subject,) shall be duely regulated, and corrected.

And your Petitioners shall duly pray for your Honours happiest proceedings.

Subscribed by 3000. of the best quality of the County.

To the Kings most Excellent Majesty,

And to the Right Honourable the LORDS, and the Honourable the House of COMMONS assembled in PARLIAMENT.

The most humble Petition of divers Baronets, Knights, Justices, Gentry, Ministers and Freeholders, Inhabitants of the County of KENT, *within the Diocesse of* Canterbury.

Most humbly shewing,

THat notwithstanding this Kingdome, hath by the singular providence of Almighty God, for many years last past, happily flourished, above all other Nations in the Christian World, under the Religion and Government by Law established: Yet hath it been of late most miserably distracted through the sinister practises of some private persons ill affected to them both.

By whose means the present Government is disgraced and traduced, The Houses of God are prophaned, and in part defaced, The Ministers of Christ are contemned and despised, The Ornaments, and many Utensils of the Church are abused, The Liturgy and Book of Common Prayer depraved, and neglected, That absolute modell of Prayer, *The Lords Prayer*, vilified, The Sacraments of the Gospel in some places unduely administred, in other places omitted, Solemn dayes of fasting observed, and appointed by private persons, Marriages illegally Solemnized, Burials

Burials uncharitably performed, And the very fundamentall of our Religion subverted, by the publication of a new creed, and teaching the abrogation of the Morall Law. For which purpose, many offensive Sermons are daily preached, and many impious Pamphlets printed, and in contempt of authority, many do what seemeth good in their own eyes, onely as if there were no King, nor Government, in this our *Israel*.

Whereby Almighty God is highly provoked, his sacred Majesty dishonoured, The peace of the Kingdome endangered, The Consciences of the people disquieted, The Ministers of Gods Word disheartened, and the Enemies of the Church emboldned in their enterprises.

For redresse whereof, May it please this great and honourable Councell, speedily to command a due observation of the Religion and Government, by law established, in such manner, as it may seem best to the piety and Wisdome of his Royall Majesty, and this Honourable Court.

Your petitioners as they shall confidently expect a blessing from Heaven upon this Church and Kingdome, So shall they have this further cause to implore the Divine Assistance upon this honourable Assembly.

Subscribed by

Knight Baronets, and Knights	24
Esquires and Gentlemen of note, above	300
Divines	108
Freeholders, and Subsidie men	800

All within the Dioceese of *Canterbury*.

To the Honourable the Knights Citizens, and Burgesses of the House of *Commons* Assembled in PARLIAMENT.

The Humble Petition of the Gentry, Clergy, and other inhabitants, subscribed of the Counties of Flint, Denby, Mountgomery, Carnarvan, Anglesey, Merioneth, *being the five Shires of* Northwales.

As it was presented this presented March *the* 5. 1641. *Accompanied with thirty thousand hands.*

WHereas the present condition of the Church of *England* (in the publike Liturgy thereof, in the antient liber-

ties, and forme of Government, as they do now ſtand eſtabliſhed by Law) hath been lately brought in queſtion, and manfold Petitions from the ſeverall quarters of this Kingdome, and other ſuch like addreſſes concerning the ſame have been preſented to this honourable Houſe.

We his Majeſties faithfull Subjects in the principalities and Counties of *North-Wales*, whom it equally concerneth, and as ſtrongly tied in duty and conſcience, do likewiſe preſume to make our humble Remonſtrance, & we do it after a long ſilence and expectation, joyned with ſome fears.

And firſt, for thoſe things which concerne the Publique Service of God, as they be of neareſt importance, and we nothing doubt, but you will take into your tendreſt thoughts, ſo we do earneſtly propound & proſtrate before your chaſt dangerous conſequence of innovation in matters of ſo high concernment, as we conceive, and leave it to your own great Wiſdomes to judge, what ſcruples and jealouſies are like to ariſe, if we be taught a new and different way of ſerving God after a full perſwaſion of the lawfullneſſe of that which is preſcribed according to the word of God, not without the deliberate, and concurrent approbation and induſtry of the moſt learned of the Proteſtant Church, of this & other Nations, and the poſſeſſion of ſo many years in the practiſe thereof, and all ſince the bleſſed time of Reformation.

The meer report hereof hath already produced no good effect, breeding in the minds of ill-diſpoſed perſons, Inſolence and contempt, in others perplexity and grief, not knowing how to ſettle themſelves, or forme their obedience in ſuch diſtractions, and ſometimes repugnancy of commands.

Then for the outward policy and forme of Government, under the Juriſdiction of Biſhops, bounded by Law, and kept with in their own limits.

It is as wee believe, that forme which came into this *Iſland*, with the firſt Plantation of Religion here, and God ſo bleſt this *Iſland*, that Religion came early in, with the firſt dawning of the day, very neere, or in the time of the Apoſtles themſelves. And in the ſucceſſion of all after ages, the ſame hath been conſtantly maintained among us, and that without any eminent interruption, or gain-ſaying, even till theſe our dayes.

And now from the comfortable experience which we feele,

and

and which our Fathers have told us, of the conveniency and moderation of this Government, together with the antiquity of the same (a strong argument of Gods speciall protection.) We do in all humility represent, and pray that the same may be still preserved entire in all the parts thereof, professing yet withall, that we heartily disclaime all scandalous Innovation, and Popish corruption whatsoever.

And we are the more incouraged in this suit, because we find it to be the unanimous and undevided request and vote of this whole ountry, who cannot without some trembling entertain a thought of change. In all which we do not presume to give any rules, but as it becomes us, humbly declare, and open our own breasts, and labour to deliver our own soules in testimony of our loyalties, and discharge of our Consciences, who shall ever take comfort to finde the same way of honouring God, continued in his own House of Prayer, the laws of the land put to actuall execution, the Peace & Government of the Church preserved, the Rumor'd alterations declined, and the distractions already to visible arising thereupon avoyded.

And as we doubt not but your great Wisdomes will take care that our Doctrine and discipline established, shall be still in force and observed, untill by some absolute law, and the opinions of learned Convocations, or Synod (according to the Customs of our prudent fore-Fathers in best times) it be otherwise ordained.

So shall we never cease to pray for a permanent blessing upon your Counsels and Resolutions, to the generall happinesse of Church and Kingdome.

To the Sacred Majesty, of our most Gracious Soveraigne Lord King CHARLES, by the Grace of God, of *England*, *Scotland*, *France*, and *Ireland*, KING: *Defender of the* Faith.

The humble gratulation and petition of divers, his Majesties faithfull subjects (of the true Protestant Religion) within the County *Palatine* of *Lancaster*.

Most gracious Soveraign,

THe most Reall and convincing'st Testimonies of your princely care, for the advancement of Gods true Religion in your Majesties Realmes

And the common good of all your subjects. Could no leſs then draw from us (who have hitherto in theſe ſtirring Times ſat ſtill) this humble acknowledgment of our due and neceſſary thanks.

We with the inmoſt and choiceſt thoughts of our ſoules, do eſteeme and prize your Majeſties moſt righteous intentions, of governing your liege people, according to the wholſome Laws of this Kingdome. A thing ſo often, and with ſuch earneſtneſſe avowed by your ſacred Majeſty, whereunto we yeeld that hearty credence, which is due to ſo religious a Prince. We do alſo with all humility and thankfullneſſe acknowledg your manifold and evident manifeſtations, (to the World) that you affect not an arbitrary Government, But the Common proſperity, and happineſſe of all your Loyall Subjects: by your readineſſe to joyn with your Parliament in ſpeedy raiſing of forces for a timely ſuppreſſion, of that odious Rebellion in Ireland, *by your late Proclamation for the putting in due execution the Laws againſt Papiſts. By your moſt Gracious condiſcending to the deſires of your Great Councell: in ſigning the Bill for the Triennall Parliament, for the relinquiſhing your Title of impoſing upon Merchandize, and power of preſſing ſouldiers. For the taking away the Star-chamber: and High Commiſſion Courts, for regulating the Councell Table, As alſo the bils for the forreſts and Stannerie Courts, with other moſt neceſſary acts. Moreover, we are confident, and well aſſured of your Majeſties zeal, for the advancement of the true Proteſtant Religion. And with inexpreſſible joy do underſtand your moſt Chriſtian and pious reſolution, for the preſervation of thoſe powerfull encouragements of Induſtry, Learning, and Piety, the means and honour of the Miniſtry, for the maintenance and continuance of our Church Government, and ſolemne Liturgy of the Church, of long continuance, and generall approbation of the moſt pious and learned of this Nation, and of the other counties: Compoſed (according to the Primitive patterne) by our bleſſed Martyrs and other religious and learned men. As alſo your gracious pleaſure, that all abuſes of Church and ſtate ſhall be reformed, according to the modell of Queen* Elizabeths *dayes, of ever bleſſed and famous memory. By the one you have weakned the hopes of the ſacrilegious devourers of the Churches Patrimony (if there be any ſuch) And by the other provided againſt all Popiſh Impieties and Idolatries: and alſo againſt the growing danger of* Anabaptiſts, Brownists, *and other* Novelists. *All which piety, love, and juſtice, we beſeech God to returne into your Royall boſome. But yet moſt gratious Soveraigne, there is one thing that ſads our hearts, and hinders the perfection of our happineſſe which is the diſtance and miſ-underſtanding betweene your Majeſty and your Parlia-*

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ment, whereby the hearts of your ſubjects are filled with feares and jealouſies Juſtice neglected, ſacred ordinances prophaned, and Trading impaired to the impoveriſhing of many of your liege people. For the removall whereof we cannot finde out any lawfull means without your Majeſties aſſiſtance and direction.

Wherefore we humbly beſeech your moſt Excellent Majeſty, to continue your moſt Chriſtian and Pious Reſolution of Ruling your people, according to the Laws of the Land, and maintaining of the ſame, of being a zealous Defender of the eſtabliſhed Doctrine, Liturgie, and Government of our Church from hereſies, Libertiniſme, and prophanneſs; an advancer of Learning, Piety, and Religion; an Encourager of Learned, Painefull, Orthodox Preachers. And whatſoever your Parliament ſhall offer to your Royall view, conducing to this bleſſed end, the common good and tranquility of your ſubjects, to be pleaſed to condiſcend unto, and gratiouſly to confirme, and withall to declare unto us ſome expedient way how we may make a dutifull addreſſe unto your Parliament, for the taking away of theſe differences and impediments, which ſtay the happy proceedings (of that moſt honourable Aſſembly, whereof your Majeſty is the head) which once removed, we doubt not, but you will be as neer your Parliament in Perſon, as in affection. That there may be a bleſſed harmony, betwixt your highneſſe, and that great Councell, we ſhall with all alacrity obſerve the ſame. Humbly rendring our lives, and fortunes for the preſervation of your Royall Perſon, Crown, and dignity, according to our bounded duty and allegiance. And heartily praying for your Majeſties long and proſperous Raigne over us.

We the Subſcribers of this Petition, do hereby give authority unto the Bearers hereof to put our names to ſuch Tranſcripts hereof, as ſhall be preſented to His Majeſty.

Atteſted by Knights and Eſquires 64. *Divines* 55. *Gentlemen* 740. *Free-holders neare* 7000.

To

To the KINGS moſt Excellent MAJESTY.

The humble Petition of the County of *Cornwall.*

WE your *Majeſties Layall ſubjects, In all duty render unto your Majeſty all thankefullneſs, for your Majeſties unexampled favour, and grace in granting unto your Subjects (in concurrence with your Parliament) ſuch Laws and Freedoms, which have moſt fully expreſſed your Majeſties Gracious Goodneſs unto your people, And we moſt thankfully receive your Majeſties free offer of a generall pardon, whereof we moſt humbly deſire to be made partakers. And we moſt humbly beſeech your Majeſty never to ſuffer your ſubjects to be governed by an Arbitrary Government, nor admit an alteration in Religion. And your Petitioners being moſt feelingly grieved for your Majeſties diſcontents: partly occaſioned by divers ſcandalous Pamphlets, and no way leſſened by Seditious Sermons: Do wiſh a confluence of all comforts, honour and happineſſe unto your Majeſty: and do heartily pray for the reconcilement betwixt your Majeſty and your Parliament. And in all thankefullneſs for your Majeſties ſaid Grace and Goodneſs, your Petitioners do offer themſelves moſt ready to maintaine, and defend with their lives, and fortunes, Your Majeſties ſacred Perſon, Honour, and Eſtate: And Lawfull Prerogative againſt all perſons whatſoever, according to the Oaths of Allegeance and Supremacy.* May 22. 1642.

Indorſed,

We the Petitioners to this Petition, do conſtitute and appoint, *Peter Courtney, Walter Langdon, Benatus Bellot,* and *Nevill Bligh* Eſquires, to deliver this Petition, in the name of the County of *Corn-wall* to his ſacred Majeſty.

To

To the Honourable Houſe of Commons, aſſembled in PARLIAMENT.

The Humble Petition of the Gentry, Miniſters, and Commonalty of the County of Kent, *agreed upon, at the generall Aſſizes of the County.*

Moſt Humbly ſheweth,

THat we cannot but take notice, how welcome to this Honourable Houſe, many Petitions have been, which yet came not from an aſſembled body of any County (as this doth) we doe therefore hope to finde as gentle and favourable a reception of this, as any other have found of their Petitions, our hearts witneſſing unto us, as good, peaceable, and pious purpoſes as the beſt.

Theſe are therefore the true and ardent deſires of this County.

1. *That you will be pleaſed to accept our due, and hearty thankes for thoſe excellent Laws (which by his Majeſties grace and goodneſſe) you have obtained for us.*

2. *That all Laws againſt Papiſts, be put in due execution, and an account taken of their diſarming, and that all Children of the Papiſts may be brought up in the reformed Religion.*

3. *That the ſolemne* Lyturgy *of the Church of* England (*Celebrious by the piety of the Biſhops and Martyrs who compoſed it*) *eſtabliſht by the ſupream Laws of this Land, atteſted and approved by the beſt of all Forraign Divines, confirmed by the ſubſcription of all the Miniſtry of this Land, a Clergie as able and Learned as any in the Chriſtian world ere enjoyed, & with a holy Love embraced by the moſt & beſt of all the Laity, that this holy exerciſe of Religion may by your Authority be enjoyed quiet and free from interruptions, ſcorns, prophaneneſſe, threats and force of ſuch men, who daily doe deprave it, and neglect the uſe of it in divers Churches, in deſpight of the Lawes eſtabliſhed.*

4. That Episcopall Government, as ancient in this Iland as Christianity it self, deduced and dispersed throughout the Christian world even from the Apostolicall times, may be preserved (as the most pious, and most prudent, and most safe Government) for the peace of the Church.

5. That all differences concerning Religion and Ceremonies may be referred to a lawfull, free and Nationall Synod, as your Remonstrance promiseth, to a generall Synod of most grave learned, pious and Judicious Divines, (the proper agents) whose interests, gifts, and callings, may quicken them in that great Worke, whose choyce to be by all the Clergy of the Land, because all the Clergy are to be bound by their resolutions, and the determination of this Synod to bind us all, when you have first formed them into a Law, and this we take to be according to the ancient and fundamentall Law of this Land, confirmed by Magna Charta

6. That some speedy and good provision may be made (as by his Majesty hath been, and is by all good men desired) against the odious and abominable scandall of schismaticall and seditious Sermons and Pamphlets, and some severe Law made against Lay-men, for daring to arrogate to themselves, and to execute the holy function of the Ministry, who (some of them) do sow their impious and discontented Doctrine, even in sacred places, by abuse of sacred Ordinances, to the advancing of Heresie, Schisme, Prophaneness, Libertinisme, Anabaptisme, and Atheisme.

7. That if the coersive power of Ecclesiasticall Courts by way of Excommunication be already abrogated, or shall be thought fit so to be, that there be some other power and authority speedily established, for suppressing the heynous, and now so much abounding sins of Incest, Adultery and Fornication, and other crimes, and for recovering Tythes, repayring of Churches, Probate of Wils, Church assesses, providing Bread and Wine for the Communion, and choyce of Church-Wardens, and other Officers in the Church, and especially for Ministers, who neglect the Celebrating of the holy Communion, and the Parishioners for not Receiving.

8. That the Professors of that Learned faculty of the Civill Law, and (without which this Kingdome cannot but suffer manifold Inconveniences) may not finde discouragements, and so divert their studies and Professions

9. That honour and profits, the powerfull encouragements of Industry, Learning, and Piety, may be preserved without further diminution to to the Clergy.

10. That you please sadly to consider the bleeding wounds of our brethren in Ireland, and with speedy succours endeavour to preserve them

whereunto his Majesty hath promised a gratious concurrence.

11. That you will please to frame an especiall Law of the Regulation of the Militia of this Kingdome, so that the Subject may know how at once to obey, both his Majesty, and both houses of Parliament; a Law whereby may be left to the discretion of Governours, as little as may be, but that the number of crimes, and what measure of punishment shall be inflicted upon the offendours, may be expresly set down in the act, and not left to any Arbitrary power, and that according to the president of former Laws, the offendours may not be tried out of the County.

12. That the pretious liberty of the Subject (the Common birth-right of every English-man) may be as in all these points preserved entire, so in this also, that no order of either of both Houses, not grounded on the Laws of this Land, may be enforced on the Subject, till it be full enacted by Parliament.

13. That his Majesties gratious message of the 20 of Jan. last for the present and future establishment of the Priviledges of Parliament, the free enjoying of our estates and fortunes, the Liberty of our persons, the security of the true Religion professed, the maintaining of his Majesties just and Regall authority, the establishing his Revenue, may be taken into speedy consideration, the effecting whereof will satisfie the desires of all us, his faithfull and loving Subjects.

14. That all possible care may be taken, that the Native commodities of this Kingdome, may have a quick vent, and that Cloathing, and other Manufactures may be improved, wherein the livelihood of many thousands do consist, and that Trade may be ballanced, that the importation do not exceed the exportation, otherwise it will prove a consumption of the Land.

15. That you please to frame some laws concerning Depopulations, Purveyances, Cart-taking, delayes in Justice, Traffick, Fishing in the Coasts, Fulling-earth, that our Sea Forts may be repaired, and our Magazine renewed.

16. That you please to consider the generall poverty that seems to overgrow this Kingdome.

17. Lastly, We humbly beseech you to consider the sad condition that we and the whole Land are in, if a good understanding be not speedily renewed between his Majesty, and both Houses of Parliament.

Our hopes are yet above our fears, secure them we beseech you, God direct & guide your consolations, for the removing of all distrusts and Jealousies, for the renewing that tye of confidence and trust, (which is the highest happiness) between our gracious Prince, and his loving Subjects.

And you shall have the daily prayers of your humble Orators of the Commonalty of Kent.

To

To the Honourable the Knights, Citizens and Burgesses of the House of Commons Assembled in Parliament.

The humble Petition of the Barones, Knights, Esquires, Gentlemen, Clergy men, Free-holders, Subsidy-men, and others of good Rank and Quality in the County of Oxford.

Agreed upon, and subscribed, at the times of their meetings to take the Protestation sent unto them.

Humbly shewing,

THat whereas some Petitions have been exposed in print, the common view, under the names of the Knights Gentlemen, Freeholders Subsidy men, of the best Ranck and Quality of the County of Oxford, *as preferred to the Honourable House of Parliament.*

We do hereby crave leave, to shew to this Honourable House, that such Petitions have not received Publick Examination among us, at any Generall meeting directed by Authority, for the service of the County.

AND we your now Petitioners, knowing our selves to be the Major part of those degrees within this County, and as desirous to expresse our Gratitude in this Honourable House, for your unwearied labours, and the happy effects thereof, for the good of this Land and State, do hereby offer up in all Humility, the greatest expression of our Thankefulness: And in like manner, our unanimous desires.

That the *Government* of this *Church* may continue, as is now by Law established: And that the *Liturgy* may be setled with such alterations (if there be cause) as your wisdomes shall approve.

That the Laws against *Papists* which oppose our *Religion*, And against *Sectaries* (of late dangerously encreased among us) that trouble the *Peace* thereof, may be put in full execution: And where those laws are defective, such further remedy therein may be provided, as to your wisdomes shall seem fit.

That a free *Synod of Oxibodux* and peaceable Divines may be convened

convened, according to the form of the *Primitive*, and pureſt times of *Chriſtianity*, for compoſing of all differences in *Doctrine*, and *Ceremonies* of *Religion*.

That the ſafety of this County and Kingdome may be provided for, by the diſpoſing of ſuch a *Militia*, as may conſiſt with the native *Liberties* of the *Subject*.

That you would be pleaſed to continue your Care in haſtening the further Relief of our diſtreſſed Brethren in *Ireland*.

And your Petitioners ſhall be ready to maintain, with their Lives and Eſtates, his *Majeſties* Perſon, Honour, and Eſtate, together with the Rights and Priviledges of *Parliament*.

And your petitioners ſhall ever pray, &c.

To the Moſt Honourable and High Court of PARLIAMENT.

The humble Petition of the Gentlemen, *and other of the Inhabitants of the County of* Cornwall.

HAving ſeen and heard the many (though ſcarce divers) Petitions to this Honourable Aſſembly, by the Inhabitants of divers Counties and Cities of this Land, as alſo Corporations, Companies, and Trades, ſome againſt Biſhops, ſome againſt the Common Prayer, and all againſt ſuch Judicial and things Super-elementary to the region of their capacity of judging, and matters onely belonging to the Judicature of this grave *Synod*, which ſeems either to diſtruſt, or direct, or both, your grave wiſdomes; We therefore the Gentlemen, and other the Inhabitants of *Cornwall*, with as many hearts, though not hands, with as many good wils, though not perſons, not in imitation, but rather by provocation, and neceſſity, in theſe times, to ſhew our good minded affections, doe humbly proſtrate the utmoſt of our ſervice to your feet. In which (or rather after which) we take leave humbly to beg.

That you would be pleased to bend your auxiliary and good affections to the redresse of the distresse of the miserable Protestants in Ireland. To gain whose good, prosperity, peace, and tranquility, to preserve the Soveraignty of that land to our Royall King, and to maintain His, and this Kingdoms honour, we shall willingly lay down our lives and fortunes.

That you will be pleased to continue your great respect, dutifull love, and true obedience, to our Royall Soveraign, by maintaining his just, and no way Anti-legall prerogative.

That you will be pleased to put the Lawes in due execution against all Jesuites, Seminaries, Papists, and Recusants.

That you will be pleased to look upon the other side, and duly weighing the actions (or rather factions) of some, (whom most men call citizens) to scourge their irregular and disorderly Schisme, and heretical Sects, into right path of serving God, to frequent his House, and to pray as well as Hear, to allow Order, and obey Conformity, to reverence learning, and bow to Authority, to be under a Discipline, and live in order.

That you will be pleased to maintain and establish the Ancient, Fundamentall, and most venerable lawes, Order, and Discipline, both of our Church and Common-wealth, to continue the Reverenced Office, and punish the offending persons of Bishops, to have in high account, and eternize (as far as in you lies) the Divine and excellent forme of Common prayer, to correct brain-forged doctrine, by your examplary precepts strike a Reverence of Gods House into every mans breast.

That you will be pleased to intimate to the People, your honourable and wise intentions concerning Divine Service, left while you hold your peace, some rejecting it in part, other altogether, they vainly conceive you countenance them.

Lastly, (Not to trouble your great affaires any longer) That you will be pleased to take into your Sage consideration, those Scandalous and ill affected Pamphlets, which fly abroad in such swarms, as are able to cloud the pure aire of Truth, and present a dark ignorance to those who have not the two wings of Justice and Knowledge to fly above them.

Now to polish this our work with a smooth demonstration of our modest intents, that the tinctures which in Introduction fell on the fore-mentioned presents, may slide without a stain from this: We do in all humility declare, that neither distrust of your intentions, nor opinion of any of our Counsels worthy your ears, even tainted our thoughts, but that

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we have ſti'l been, and are Confident, that this moſt wiſe Synod hath ever thought fit, reſolv'd, and will confirme into action, what we now humbly requeſt: therefore this our preſent, not ſo much a Petition, as a Prayer of wiſing and thankefull hearts for the hoped ſequell, is only to ſhew our true intentions and good will towards his gracious Majeſty; and this High Court, as Inſtruments of the peace of our ſoules and bodies, for which we are unanimouſly, and immutably reſolv'd to ſpend our deareſt bloud.

Publiſhed by J. B. *Gent.*

To the Right Honourable the Lords, and Commons aſſembled in the high Court of Parliament.

The humble Petition of the Knights, Eſquires, Gentlemen, Miniſters, Free holders, and other Inhabitants, within the County of *Hereford*.

Who moſt humbly pray,

THat the preſent publique forme of Gods Worſhip, and the Adminiſtration of the bleſſed Sacraments, with other Rites agreeable to Gods holy Word, and pureſt Antiquity, which have been ſundry times eſtabliſhed by godly Acts of Parliament, may now again in theſe broken and troubled times, be to Gods glory, and the Churches Peace, re-eſtabliſhed and confirmed; That Epiſcopacy being the Ancient and primitive Government of the Church, Renowned for Succeſſes, Victorious againſt Schiſmes, and Hereſies; and eſpecially, of late years againſt that *Hydra* of Hereſies, the *Roman* Papacy, Glorious for ancient and late martyrdoms, Happy before the corruption of Popery, and ſince the Reformation in the plantation and preſervation of Truth and Peace, eminently ſerviceable to this Commonwealth, moſt compliable with the Civill Government, into the Fabrick and body of which it is riverted and incorporated, and moſt apt and eaſie at all times by the State to be reduced into Order: may for the future (as formerly) by your great authority be continued and maintained for the glory of God, the preſervation of Order, Peace, and Unity, the Reformation and ſuppreſſion of wickedneſs and vice, and the mature prevention of Schiſms, Factions, and Seditions, that Cathedrals, the monu-

ments of our Forefathers Charity, the reward of present Literature and furtherance of Piety, be also continued.

The which we your humble Petitioners the more earnestly beseech your Honours to grant, for that strange fears dispossess our Hearts, that the sudden mutation of Government, so long settled, so well known, and approved, cannot recompence the Disturbances and Disorders, which it may work by novelty, with any proportionable utility, being most confident, in your Honours, Wisdoms, and Justice, that all Excesses, Exorbitances, and Encroachments, that shall be found issuing not from any poyson in the nature of the Discipline, but rather from the infirmity and corruption of the Persons (unto which the very best Government is subject) shall be duely regulated and corrected.

And your Petitioners shall pray, &c.

Subscribed by Knights, Esquires, and Gentlemen of Quality, 68
Doctors. 8
Ministers of good repute, as will appear by the Originall Petitions, 150
Freeholders and Inhabitants of the County of *Hereford.* 3600

To the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses of the Honourable House of Commons assembled in PARLIAMENT,

The humble Petition of the Knights, Esquires, Gentlemen, Ministers, Freeholders, and other inhabitants, of the County of *Cornwall.*

Humbly shewing,

THat we are no less thankefull for the many excellent Laws, which by his Majesties grace and favour, and your care and assiduousness, you have obtained for us, then those who have been more forward to present you with Petitions; doubting not, but you will welcome this with as hearty acceptance, as you have done any other, it proceeding from loyall hearts to our Soveraign, a tender care of our Profession, and abundance of affection to the Commonwealth; and whereas we understand that there is a purpose, if not a presentment already to this honourable House, of a Petition heretofore by some Justices of the Peace tendred to the grand Enquest, at our last Assises, to be by them considered, whether fit to be presented to this Honourable house; which on deliberate debate was much disliked,

disliked, as it was laid; but since (as we are informed) indirectly obtruded on diverse persons, without reading or perusall; many of them since retracting their opinions, and wishing back their hands; and we having resolved to rest upon the abilities, and care of our Knights and Burgesses, our hands and minds, for matter of our particular concernments; yet since their absence from us, and attendance in Parliament, finding and feeling our own grievances, giving us just grounds and feare of sudden misery, by disobedience & contempt of Laws, thus provoked with bleeding hearts, we beg the help of your Wisdomes, to advise and apply some speedy remedy for these felt and feared evills. And for as much as there are lately risen amongst us some few of the Clergy, and many of the Laity, publike contemners and depravers of the Ceremonies and the Service of the Book of Common prayer, by Law established, irreverent vilifiers of Gods house, and Church Assemblies in Prayer times, and generally disobedient to Ecclesiastical Government, of whom many have subscribed or subsigned to the receited Petition; Although the said Ceremonies and Book of Common Prayer, are by far the greater and discreeter part of our Congregations inoffensively and reverently received and approved.

1 WE pray (no way presuming) to prescribe rules, but submitting to your graver Judgements, that a National Synod of our learned, and approved Clergy, by the rest to be chosen, may be convened, and some Parliamentary course speeded, for the ordaining, confirming and establishing of the said Service Book, and Ceremonies, or some of them, or others not repugnant to Gods word, tending most to the peace and purity of our Religion and Church: before which settlement, our humble desires are, that a Parliamentary Declaration, may speedily issue forth, for requiring of obedience to the Laws established.

2. We likewise humbly pray the continuance of that ancient and ever reverenced Episcopal Government in our Church, and that the Delinquences of any particular person, may not cause that high and holy Office, or Calling, to suffer.

3. We pray likewise that in every Parish unprovided, there may be a Preaching Minister, and a competent maintenance raised for him, and where Impropriations are, and Preaching Ministers not sufficiently cared for, allowance may be had or bettered.

4. We pray likewise that such of our Clergy, as upon enquiry, shall be found, either Scandalous or not Orthodox, may be admonished

monished, and bound for the better supply and discharge of their Cures, or removed.

5 We pray likewise, that some positive Law may be Enacted for Parsons and Vicars recovery of their Tythes, and that such course may be taken for the obtaining of them, as may be most speedy, and least chargeable; *That so those that Minister at the Altar, may live by the Altar.*

6. We pray likewise, that for the restraining and preventing of inordinate licentiousnes, there may be some penall Law Enacted for the punishment of Adulteries, and divers other offences not punishable by the Common Law.

7 As likewise, that there may be some Coersive power or Law, ordained for compelling of refractory men to the payment of their rates, and for the reparations of their Parish Churches, in which of late some are grown very remisse and backward.

8 We pray likewise, that great care may be taken not onely for disarming of Recusants, but for the Education of their children in the Protestant Religion.

9 We likewise pray, that some speedy course may be taken for the Redemption of those wofull Christian Captives in *Barbary*, the want of whom, hath occasioned an extraordinary decay and poverty in our Maritime Townes and Parishes, and that our Coasts may be sufficiently gauded and secured.

10 We likewise pray, that whereas this County hath been and is surcharged double, at least, with Armes, and very high in Subsidies, much above our abilities, and the respective charge of divers parts of this Kingdome; we may (in consideration hereof) be relieved in future.

11 We likewise pray, that the Sheriffes Turn, now grown an unnecessary Court, and onely used to the grievous oppression of the meaner sort of people, may be suppressed, and taken away, it being more burdensome then the Office of the Clerk of the Market formerly hath been.

12 We likewise pray, that such Dutchy Tenants, as within our County pay over their rightfull Rents and Duties unto the Dutchy Officers, may not be doubly charged by Proces out of the

the Exchequer, as now they are, by extream and continuall Amercements.

13 We likewise pray, that there may be a reparation of the decay of the Castle of Saint *Mawes*, and that there may be a supply of the wants of Ordnances, Carriages, Powder, and Ammunition, in all which, it is extreamly defective.

And thus withall humbleneſſe, Craving pardon for with-holding you from your other weighty Affaires, but perſwaded that the cauſe is conſiderable, and may well challenge a part of your thoughts, and be put in action, for the effecting of which, as of all things ſtanding to the Purity and peace of our Church, and Religion, as for the ſafe Defence and Honour of his Majeſty, his Royall Poſterity, and Kingdomes; And in theſe, your and our happineſſe, as for uniting of his Gracious Majeſty, and this Honourable Aſſembly in a mutuall conſent and compliance, as for the unanimous and proſperous proceedings of this Parliament, we doe, and ever ſhall, with humble hearts implore Gods gracious aſſiſtance and bleſſing.

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